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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 12 October 2010, at 10 a.m.

*Chairperson*: Mr. Flisiuk (Vice-Chairperson) ..... (Poland)

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Agenda item 50: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.*

**Agenda item 50: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space** (A/65/20 and A/C.4/65/L.2)

*Panel discussion on Space and emergencies*

1. **The Chairperson**, recalling that the panel discussion had been called for by the Member States of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), said that emergency situations and disasters continued to haunt societies. It had become increasingly important to build capacities at all levels to mitigate their devastating effects. Emergencies and other major challenges must be addressed in a holistic manner; space technology applications provided a set of tools of increasing importance to decision makers.

2. **Mr. Choi** (Assistant Secretary-General, Chief Information Technology Officer), illustrating his statement with a computerized slide presentation, said that he had participated in a mission to Haiti, with other United Nations officials and a non-governmental organization called the ICT4Peace Foundation, to inspect United Nations operations and to discuss with all parties how to improve access to vital information during crises. The United Nations had made a commitment that its presence in Haiti would serve as a launch site for an enhanced crisis information management capability. Tragically, the earthquake that struck the island only a few weeks later had prevented that from happening. Better preparation and the sharing of vital crisis information by all parties could have saved lives.

3. Crisis management depended heavily on information and communications technology in both man-made crises and natural disasters. Non-governmental and non-United Nations actors were becoming increasingly active and sophisticated in implementing effective information management methods during crises. The United Nations crisis information management strategy recognized the significant stake and responsibilities of the United Nations and its Member States in preventing, mitigating, managing and recovering from all types of crises. The strategy would enhance the collective information management capacity of the United Nations and its experience to integrate and harmonize work practices and systems across policies, which could save lives and protect human dignity. The goal underlying the strategy was to help the United Nations deal more effectively with all stages of a crisis life cycle and work better with all stakeholders by providing the right information at the right time and ensuring access to timely and reliable information to save lives and achieve better results.

4. Unfortunately, many organizations involved in crises often developed point solutions instead of integrated solutions to manage information. That was the result of years of incremental expansion without proper planning and coordination and the need for many organizations to operate across multiple countries when responding to different situations. However, advances in technology and communication had made it possible to develop more integrated approaches to information management and had enabled more effective collaboration during crises.

5. In collaboration with the ICT4Peace Foundation, his office was leading the strategic effort with key stakeholders in the field and at Headquarters to produce significant improvements in the international community's overall crisis information management capabilities, through an integrated approach focusing on four main areas: information architecture, technology development, capacity-building and stakeholder management. The success of its endeavours would have far-reaching implications for the United Nations and all other actors during crises. Standardizing the collection and sharing of critical information could lead to more effective decision-making and more timely delivery of essential services. The availability of more credible, accurate, complete and timely information could improve public communications and journalistic reporting and, with up-to-date statistics, fundraising efforts that depended upon public opinion could be launched more effectively. Post-conflict reporting and assessment could be more transparent.

6. Crisis information management included a wide range of applications, such as space-based technologies, satellite imagery, satellite-based emergency telecommunications and global navigation satellite systems. Despite United Nations efforts to improve access to satellite imagery and space-based data and applications, more could be done to share available resources and to negotiate better licensing agreements while avoiding duplication. Member States could support the United Nations in reaching such agreements by contributing resources to the Space Aid

Fund, that would make it possible for data to be purchased expeditiously. The use of satellite-based telecommunications could be better coordinated through appropriate inter-agency structures under cluster-based humanitarian response arrangements, complemented by support from space agencies, other related organizations and the private sector.

7. The transition which the world of information and communications technology was experiencing would have a major influence on the future of crisis management. However, in addition to technology, political will, leadership and a willingness to cooperate were required, as well as public awareness and support, and financial resources from all sources.

8. **Ms. Othman** (Director, United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs), illustrating her statement with a computerized slide presentation, said that the Office had been established to promote international cooperation in the use of outer space in order to achieve development goals for the benefit of humankind. The Office was responsible for servicing COPUOS and its subsidiaries, including the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee, and the Fourth Committee. It maintained the Register of Objects Launched into Outer Space and implemented the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER).

9. Rapid and efficient responses to disasters depended on information about their impacts. Emergency responders used satellite information to identify usable infrastructure to deliver humanitarian assistance. Modern satellites could see below the clouds, which was essential for damage assessment and the planning of recovery efforts after disasters.

10. UN-SPIDER had been established in 2006 to ensure that all countries and international and regional organizations had access to and developed the capacity to use all types of space-based information to support the full disaster management cycle. Therefore, the office was not only involved in emergency response but other aspects of disaster management, including early warning and mitigation. The UN-SPIDER network consisted of regional and international agencies, regional support offices and national focal points. The core of its work was providing technical advisory support which consisted of raising awareness of the importance of space-based information for disaster management and emergency response; advising Governments on how to use space-based information; guiding international policies on disaster management and emergency response; and bringing together space communities and disaster management communities.

11. Regional centres on space science and technology education in Brazil, India, Mexico, Morocco and Nigeria assisted the Office and the Committee in building capacity in remote sensing and geographic information systems, satellite communication, satellite meteorology and global climate, and space and atmospheric sciences. Curricula would be developed in the near future on global navigation satellite systems and space law. The regional centres could meet the needs of Member States for training in space-based information for disaster management.

12. **Mr. González Aninat** (second Vice-Chair, Rapporteur of COPUOS) said that the theme of the panel discussion was extremely important; in a globalized world, disasters unfortunately had direct and indirect effects on all countries. A great deal of progress and important agreements had been reached within the regional framework of the Space Conferences of the Americas; those achievements had taken place within a global context of a legal and political framework whose origins lay in the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE II), where the conclusion had been reached that regional cooperation was the most efficient means of confronting a fundamentally asymmetrical world. It had been asymmetrical then because of the Cold War and was asymmetrical now because of many challenges, including global warming and social and societal warming. The subject of disasters and emergencies needed to be revisited, and political aspects must be included in any analysis. Space-based applications could and should play a key role in the design of an early warning, emergency and reconstruction policy to address natural and humanitarian disasters. Humanitarian disasters, including migrations and acts of terrorism, were often the cause, or the direct or indirect result, of natural disasters.

13. The duty of States to cooperate with one another, which had been taken lightly too often, was of enormous importance in the case of natural disasters. International cooperation and human security were an essential aspect of the mitigation of natural disasters.

given the world's globalized and interconnected nature. The international community would live in a permanent state of emergency as long as obstacles remained to the full recognition of human rights and dignity. Preventive measures were needed to mitigate that situation. The use of space-based technology, including satellite sensing, was an important tool in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the implementation of long-term sustainability projects. Early warning and early action could help to prepare for disasters, based on the information provided by satellites.

14. The principles of space law, dating back to the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, which had established the concept of outer space as the heritage of all mankind, were founded on international cooperation. International cooperation was becoming truly global in nature, involving a multiplicity of actors and a strong presence by civil society. Preventive measures, based on information from satellites, could reduce vulnerability while strengthening human security and development.

15. Remote sensing and the information it produced were currently caught up in a trade war with the space industry, which was mainly private. However, when the principles guiding remote sensing had been drafted, satellites had played a very different strategic role, in the context of the cold war. Space law must respond to current realities and must be clarified in many areas, such as satellite-based evidence in litigation and the sphere of patents, and must ensure that all countries, regardless of their stage of development, had access to space-based technologies. Where disasters were concerned, general references to environmental protection were inadequate and could not effectively address, in a preventive manner, the phenomena currently affecting international stability. The Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for the Benefit and in the Interest of All States, Taking into Particular Account the Needs of Developing Countries was ambiguous and too general and did not cover the subject of emergencies or disasters.

16. At UNISPACE II, a Chilean initiative on the need for stronger regional cooperation had been adopted, ushering in legislation that had strengthened States' practices. There was a growing awareness of the transnational nature of space applications and the corresponding need for concerted action. UNISPACE III had closed the gaps opened up by the rapid progress in space technologies, especially telecommunications, and had addressed the importance of international cooperation in environmental monitoring and disaster management, which had been revisited at the UNISPACE III Review Conference.

17. The International Charter "Space and Major Disasters", adopted by several space and space-related agencies around the world, had been designed to provide a unified system of space data acquisition and delivery to those affected by disasters. That concept had been broadened with the establishment of UN-SPIDER, which addressed the entire emergency cycle and was not subject to membership of any given space agency.

18. The Space Conferences of the Americas were an example of regional collaboration and interregional dialogue for the dissemination of and access to knowledge through the supply of strategic information on development and human security. The Conferences had continued to strengthen the commitment to the Millennium Development Goals through space-based applications and recognized that the new challenges posed by the modern world needed a global vision that only satellites could provide.

19. **Mr. Windsor** (Australia) said that he agreed with the Chief Information Technology Officer that States were having to catch up with technologies to respond to disasters and that there was an inadequate understanding of the tools that technology could actually provide. The Asia-Pacific Space Agency Forum had established Sentinel Asia after the Asian tsunami, bringing together the space and disaster management agencies of the region to build up a disaster risk management system. It was functioning and receiving information from satellites, sharing the data and using technologies to transform data into something usable by disaster management agencies. It was currently providing information on 10 situations in five countries of the region, including flooding in Pakistan and volcanic eruptions in Indonesia. The organization was voluntary and cooperative and hopefully would provide a model for regional cooperation that could be shared in other countries in the world. The Asian Disaster Reduction Centre in Japan was the point of contact for emergency observation requests for Sentinel Asia, and the UN-SPIDER regional support office provided a connection with the multilateral system. The support of

the United Nations in the region was highly valuable, especially for small island developing States which faced not only the effects of disasters but also such pressing issues as climate change.

20. **Mr. Michelen** (Dominican Republic) said that his country was grateful for help from the international community to build capacities to deal with natural disasters. In January 2010 a technical advisory mission had arrived from the UN-SPIDER programme. In the aftermath of the earthquake that had struck Haiti in January 2010, the people of the Dominican Republic had learned that loss of human life and damage to property must be prevented before major disasters occurred. His country and Haiti were exposed to the same natural hazards; their capacities to respond to them were essentially the same and only varied by degree. He appreciated the mandatory nature of cooperation in all areas.

21. **Mr. Choi** (Assistant Secretary-General, Chief Information Technology Officer) said that deforestation in Haiti was significant and that, consequently, its towns and cities were more likely to be inundated during hurricanes. Space technology could look at patterns, including the amount of rainfall, and determine what would happen in the event of a hurricane. There was always the possibility of not building towns where flooding was likely to occur. There were many ways to use space technology to do more to prevent and manage crises.

22. **Ms. Othman** (Director, United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs) said that there were many ways to strengthen the relationship between Member States and UN-SPIDER. For example, States could nominate national focal points to that Office; her Office had sent letters requesting that they do so. States could also nominate regional support officers.

23. **Mr. González Aninat** (second Vice-Chair/Rapporteur of COPUOS) noted the immediate and effective support his country, Chile, had received after the earthquake there in February 2010, especially from the UN-SPIDER and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. Chile had collaborated in the establishment of UN-SPIDER, which was a valuable tool. Major natural disasters needed to be addressed comprehensively, perhaps in a new United Nations space policy, with more effective involvement of regional organizations such as those in Latin America. Citing financial reasons, regional organizations, including those in the Latin American and Caribbean region, had not attended COPUOS meetings; the General Assembly needed to reaffirm the necessity of attending and participating in those meetings. The least developed countries were the most vulnerable to natural disasters and were the most affected by the failure of organizations to attend meetings. Those countries needed access to space technologies. He noted that 80 per cent of the deaths caused by the 2004 tsunami in the Indian Ocean could have been prevented if existing space technology systems had been used to provide timely warnings.

*General debate*

24. **Mr. Lambert** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Armenia, Azerbaijan, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the European Union remained strongly committed to guaranteeing the peaceful uses of outer space for all nations and for future generations. The International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space was a substantive chapter of the European Space Policy, to be implemented by the European Commission through the setting up of a European space programme. That new constitutional framework aimed to achieve a more effective coordination of the actions of the European Union and its member States. On 27 September 2010, European Union Ministers had endorsed a revised version of the 2008 draft Code of Conduct for outer space activities as a basis for wider consultations. That Code would provide States with a non-binding instrument responding to concerns regarding the security and sustainability of space activities. The European Union attached great importance to the issue of the long-term sustainability of space activities, in view of the growing strategic and economic value of outer space. The solution to problems such as space debris, radio interference and the protection of space systems were key to ensuring the peaceful, sound, sustainable and equitable sharing of space resources.

25. An important part of the discussion held within COPUOS and other forums concerned the use of space systems for socio-economic applications. From security to natural resources management, satellites were assuming a growing importance in everyday life.

There was an ongoing need to reflect on the better use of outer space and of space systems and capacities, notably by educating and involving the users of those applications. The implementation of the UN-SPIDER programme was central to ensuring that all countries had access to and developed the capacity to use space-based information during all phases of disaster management, including the risk reduction phase.

26. Strengthening the link between the providers and users of space services was another major challenge being addressed by European space policy. With a view to meeting that challenge, Belgium and the European Union had recently held a high-level conference entitled "Space for the African Citizen". The outcome of that event would be presented in the discussion at the Third Africa-European Union Summit, to be held shortly in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

27. **Mr. Prates** (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), the acceding State the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and the associated States Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, said that space applications must benefit all countries, hence the importance of universal access to space-based data. Developing countries needed such data not only for technological development, but also for sustainable economic, social and environmental development. Countries with greater space capabilities must focus on capacity-building to enable developing countries to receive, interpret and model space-based data. South-South cooperation was an important part of enhancing those capacities. The Space Conference of the Americas was a valuable forum for the strengthening of regional cooperation. The strengthening of national and regional capacity, investment in the development of space technology and space science and technology education were prerequisites for the access of developing countries to the benefits of the peaceful uses of outer space. In that regard, he drew attention to the activities of the Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education for Latin America and the Caribbean.

28. MERCOSUR believed that the United Nations Programme on Space Applications should continue to focus, as a matter of priority, on areas in which most developing countries could participate and benefit from the activities carried out in implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III. In order to maximize the benefits of space applications, geospatial data should be deemed public goods. The experience of his region had shown that free access to open-source software for those applications could be guaranteed.

29. Space technologies were vital for the implementation of the recommendations of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and as a tool for responding quickly and appropriately to challenges such as climate change, drought, desertification, loss of biodiversity, food and energy crises, and artificial and natural disasters. Space technology was already being used in his region to monitor agricultural activities in semi-arid zones. MERCOSUR urged COPUOS to reflect on how it could contribute to the objectives of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012.

30. UN-SPIDER had become an important part of the world network for disaster prevention and early response. The effectiveness of those actions could be multiplied through ongoing coordination between UN-SPIDER and other initiatives that promoted the use of space-based data. UN-SPIDER should also consolidate its work and increase its efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

31. **Mr. Windsor** (Australia) said that space activities had increasingly become an integral part of everyday life. Benefits derived from space applications had dramatically increased safety, security, accuracy, predictability and convenience in daily life. Space-based sensors could gather data from sites around the world, including places that were too remote or inaccessible for ground-based data acquisition. Satellite-based Earth observation helped provide some of the evidence necessary for Governments to make informed decisions. Australia therefore supported an international rules-based approach to promote peaceful, safe and responsible space operations and further strengthen international cooperation. Through its international relationships, Australia contributed to monitoring and managing the space environment. For example, the Australian Space Research Program was funding research into the automated high-precision tracking of space debris.

32. Australia, like the majority of countries, was reliant on others for satellites and launch facilities, and was dependent on properly functioning systems of international cooperation. It was in the process of developing a national space policy, which would state that international collaboration was vital to Australia's

space efforts. It would also further strengthen its international relationships by co-hosting with Japan the seventeenth session of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum in Melbourne in November 2010. The theme of the forum was "The role of space technology and industry in addressing climate change", which had been the topic of a panel discussion in the Committee in 2009.

33. Climate change and human activities were accelerating hazards such as deforestation, landslides, droughts and flooding. Environmental monitoring had become more important in the mitigation of those hazards. In addition, Australian scientists had been using data derived from satellite images as a basis for a national carbon accounting system.

34. **Mr. Hamed** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation stood ready to support any initiative aimed at preventing the militarization and weaponization of outer space. He called for all States, without distinction, to be afforded access to outer space for peaceful purposes and expressed his rejection of attempts to appropriate outer space by any means. Welcoming the statements in the Committee's report (document A/65/20) on the use of Earth observation satellites to support sustainable development and the importance of ensuring non-discriminatory and timely access to remote-sensing data and derived information at little or no cost, he called for further efforts to enhance the capacities of developing countries in the use of remote-sensing technology.

35. His Government understood the important role that remote-sensing technologies could play in economic life. Its General Organization of Remote Sensing participated in a range of projects designed to develop and protect his country's natural resources and economic sectors. His Government had concluded numerous cooperation agreements on sharing information and expertise relating to the peaceful uses of outer space. In that connection, he called on COPUOS to contribute to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development by focusing on key challenges such as food security, biodiversity and climate change, among others, and to consider convening a fourth United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. He furthermore called for greater use to be made of UN-SPIDER in response to the devastating effects of natural disasters.

36. Recalling the importance of international cooperation on the peaceful uses of outer space for development, prosperity and growth, he urged developed countries to share technology and information with developing countries and countries with economies in transition in order to make the world a more secure and more stable place for all.

37. **Mr. Hernández Toledano** (Cuba) said that there were almost 23,000 nuclear weapons in the world, much more powerful than the ones that had sown terror and death in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, with about one third ready to be deployed immediately. Global military expenditures were increasing at a dizzying pace, having risen to approximately 1.5 trillion dollars. It was paradoxical that, in the current state of the world, some countries were devoting such astronomical figures to military expenditures as well as millions more to the arms race in space, while other nations sought instead to ensure that outer space, the common heritage of mankind, would be made to serve more noble ends, such as sustainable development and the prevention of natural disasters. The legal regime governing outer space was not adequate to guarantee that there would be no arms race in space. The Conference on Disarmament, the single multilateral negotiating forum in the field, should take the lead in urgently negotiating a multilateral agreement on the prevention of all aspects of an arms race in outer space. Otherwise, the many promising space applications would have no future. COPUOS had a special responsibility to promote the peaceful uses of outer space and to refine the ethical principles and legal instruments guaranteeing an absolutely peaceful, fair and non-discriminatory use of all space applications.

38. Cuba, despite its limited resources, was investing more and more in space research and space applications for peaceful purposes, such as meteorological applications that saved lives by predicting natural disasters, or detecting forest fires. It was a universally accepted legal principle that all States had the right to explore and use outer space for the benefit of all humanity. Yet not all States could expect to achieve fully autonomous space capabilities in the near future. Consequently, as more nations engaged in space activities, bilateral and multilateral cooperation and the need to exchange experience and technology acquired more urgency, especially for the developing countries. For instance, COPUOS should work more closely with the Committee on Sustainable

Development. Climate change and food security, where, again, international cooperation was essential, were two fields to which COPUOS should turn its attention. All nations had to work together in a coordinated, non-discriminatory way to ensure an optimal and responsible enjoyment of the limitless possibilities of space research and applications.

39. **Mr. Weisleder** (Costa Rica) said that the peaceful uses of outer space of particular interest to Costa Rica were scientific research and development of technological capabilities in the developing countries within a framework of international cooperation, space legislation, environmental protection and the prevention and mitigation of natural disasters. At the United Nations, COPUOS should coordinate with Member States to ensure that space applications satisfied the development needs of all countries.

40. The Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines developed by that Committee marked an advance, but they needed to be rounded out by national legislation. It was, moreover, the exclusive duty of States at any stage of development to regulate in the interest of peace the use of nuclear energy sources in space.

41. Free and fair access should be guaranteed to the geostationary orbit and its applications, which, as a limited natural resource that risked becoming saturated, should be rationalized and made available irrespective of a State's current technical capabilities. The orbit had great potential for use in social and educational programmes and medical assistance in the developing countries. There should be more coordination between COPUOS and its two subcommittees, bearing in mind the responsibility of the United Nations for the progressive development of outer space law.

42. UN-SPIDER had recently concluded a welcome agreement to make the Water Centre for the Humid Tropics of Latin America and the Caribbean the support centre for the regional offices to be established. Costa Rica would continue working within the Space Conference of the Americas; and its National Aerospace Research and Development Council would work to develop aerospace technology in the Central American region as a whole. Cooperation was already ongoing on the Daedalus project for launching a weather balloon into the stratosphere that would measure and image atmospheric variables. Such activities showed how even small countries with limited resources could participate in activities traditionally considered the sole province of great Powers. When States combined their efforts with those of the private sector, and had the support of their scientific and academic community, long-term development became a possibility.

43. **Ms. Yang** Yuya (China) said that China had made significant progress in areas such as space exploration and satellite technologies in the past year, having launched a satellite at the beginning of October, advanced its satellite navigation system and space infrastructure projects and achieved substantive progress in the construction and integration of the ground systems for remote-sensing satellites. Moreover, space technology had been applied extensively in economic and social activities, which played an irreplaceable role in social and economic development.

44. Her Government was committed to exploring outer space in the interests of peace, development, cooperation, the rule of law and the well-being of all mankind. The UN-SPIDER Beijing Office would soon become operational. Her Government would continue to support the work of the Office to promote international cooperation and capacity-building in the area of space technology for disaster reduction, from which other developing countries could benefit. China was also co-sponsoring a training programme in global navigation satellite systems and their applications with the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization.

45. 2011 would mark the 50th anniversary both of COPUOS and of manned space flights, and the commemoration being planned by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs would offer States an opportunity to showcase their space achievements and share their technologies. China was making active preparations for the exhibition. It was ready to cooperate in a practical way with all countries, especially the developing countries, to explore and build peace in outer space in a more open and responsible manner.

46. **Mr. Kim** Yong Jo (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that dozens of States were now capable of launching satellites, and many nations, including developing countries, were participating in peaceful outer space activities. His nation had been one of the satellite-manufacturing and launching States since 1998 and had placed its second satellite in orbit in 2009. Even though his Government's outer space activities were peaceful, in exercise of its sovereign

right as a State party to the Outer Space Treaty, the launch of its second satellite had regrettably been unjustifiably condemned as a ballistic-missile launch, leading the Security Council to impose selective and coercive sanctions. The moving force behind that action had been the hostile policy of the United States of America against his country.

47. Over the years, international concern had arisen over acts that jeopardized the peaceful use of outer space, such as the development by the United States of America of a missile defence system in combination with a satellite installed in outer space. Touted as a response to an alleged threat of ballistic missiles from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea or other countries, its real aim was to realize a dream of world hegemony. It was telling that the resolution calling for transparency and confidence-building in outer space activities was regularly adopted by the General Assembly with the support of the overwhelming majority of Member States, the sole exception being the United States. The General Assembly resolutions calling for the prevention of the military use of outer space and encouraging its peaceful use should be unconditionally implemented by all Member States.

48. **Mr. Khoritinski** (Ukraine) said that while space-based systems were being used in such areas as agriculture, land use, water resource management and disaster management, there should be a greater reliance on space-based observations to mitigate climate change. The spin-offs of space technology were a powerful engine for technological innovation and growth in both the industrial and service sectors and could help achieve social and humanitarian objectives and develop national communications infrastructures and other projects that would promote sustainable development.

49. COPUOS should continue to plan for a fourth United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. There had been steady progress in the past year in implementing the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, but more voluntary contributions were needed from States and organizations to keep it in operation.

50. Ukraine's national space programme for the period 2008-2012 used Earth observations and space data to address the most important sustainable development issues and envisaged the launching of a national satellite telecommunications system. As a participant in commercial space projects, Ukraine was aware of the dangers of the uncontrolled proliferation of rocket and missile technologies, and adhered strictly to its treaty obligations in that respect. Peace in outer space would be safeguarded by greater transparency, information sharing and compliance with international space law. Ukraine supported the main principles of the proposed European Union code of conduct for outer space activities.

51. The possibility of using satellites in medium-Earth orbit to improve international satellite-aided search and rescue operations should be explored. His Government fully supported the workplan of UN-SPIDER for 2010-2011. In that connection, a UN-SPIDER regional support office had recently been opened in Kyiv.

52. It was important to provide non-discriminatory access to the remote-sensing data, at a reasonable cost and in a timely manner. Information and technologies should be shared between countries through bilateral, regional and international collaborative projects. Ukraine was studying how aerospace data could be used in environmental protection, sustainable development and security. It was also doing research on the problem of space debris and was using, modernizing and designing its own space launch vehicles taking into account the recommendations of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee. The problem was most acute in low-Earth orbits. There should be further discussion on the establishment under United Nations auspices of an international platform of data and information on objects in outer space, and best practices and technical norms for space operations should be codified. Moreover, the exploitation of the geostationary orbit should be rationalized and access to it made available to all States, irrespective of their technical capabilities.

53. More States and intergovernmental organizations should adhere to the United Nations treaties on outer space in order to broaden the legal basis for space activities; at the same time, international space law had to be improved in order to be effective in addressing contemporary space activities in areas such as the definition and delimitation of outer space, the use of nuclear power sources in outer space and the threat posed by space debris. A new, comprehensive convention on space law would be desirable.

*The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.*